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FED RAISES INTEREST RATE BY 75 BPS, BIGGEST HIKE SINCE 1994

The widely expected decision comes in the backdrop of inflation soaring to a 40-year high of 8.6% in May

MORE RATE HIKES LIKELY TILL INFLATION COOLS

The latest increase has pushed the benchmark federal-funds rate to a range of 1.5-1.75%. While announcing the decision, the Federal Open Market Committee said it is "strongly committed to returning inflation to its 2% objective" and expects to continue to raise the key rate. The committee expects the Fed's preferred inflation index to rise to 5.2%

WARNS OF GROWING ECONOMIC DISTRESS

- It also warned of a sagging global economy, cutting 2022 economic growth forecast to 1.7% from 2.8% projected earlier
- "Labour market remains extremely tight," said Fed Chairman Jerome Powell. The Fed also cited the Ukraine war and China lockdown policies as sources of additional inflation pressures

10.8%

U.S. WHOLESALE INFLATION IN MAY, UP FROM 10% IN APRIL

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in conversation with NCP chief Sharad Pawar, as PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti, Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge and SP's Akhilesh Yadav look on after a meeting on Presidential polls in Delhi | SHEKHAR YADAV

Pawar, Mamata, Kharge to evolve Prez consensus

18 Oppn parties attend meet; Rajnath, Nadda begin consultations

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR
@ New Delhi

NCP chief Sharad Pawar on Wednesday fobbed off requests from several parties to become the joint Opposition candidate for the forthcoming Presidential polls, at a two-hour meeting called by Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee here.

Mamata set the ball rolling by proposing his name and getting the concurrence of several others. But Pawar politely declined. The meeting that had representation from 18 Opposition parties urged him to reconsider his decision.

But Pawar sought to put a lid on it, taking to his Twitter handle later to say: "I sincerely appreciate the leaders of opposition parties for suggesting my name as a candidate for the election of the President of India, at the meeting. However, I like to state that I have humbly declined the proposal of my candidature."

The meeting adopted a unanimous resolution to field a common Opposition candidate in the Presidential elections. It decided to tentatively meet again on June 21, informed CPI MP Binoy Viswam. Mamata, Pawar and Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge were authorised to consult other parties to evolve a consensus on the matter.

With Pawar shutting the door, sources said Mamata suggested the names of National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah and retired diplomat Gopalkrishna Gandhi for consideration as alternative candidates. The suggestion was met with a stony silence, an opposition MP informed.

Kharge said his party has no particular name in mind but will sit with others to play a constructive role to arrive at a consensus if Pawar continues declining the offer. Mamata said she will consult other parties that could not make it to the meeting, like AAP, SAD, AIMIM, TRS and BJD.

Parallelly, BJP leader Rajnath Singh called up Opposition leaders like Kharge, Mamata and SP chief Akhilesh Yadav to build a national consensus on the Presidential elections. He also spoke to JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar. Sources said Opposition leaders sought to know the NDA nominee for the high post. BJP chief J P Nadda, too worked the phones, to reach out to leaders of parties like the BJD, YSR Cong, JD(U), RJD, TRS, DMK and others with whom he is has good rapport.

TOO PREMATURE TO COMMENT: GANDHI

"It is too premature to comment," Gopalkrishna Gandhi, said when asked about his candidature. He is the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi and was the consensus opposition pick for Vice President in 2017

IAF to recruit 16K Agniveers in 4 yrs: Air Marshal

M G CHETAN @ Bengaluru

AIR Marshal Manavendra Singh, Air Officer Commanding in Chief of the HQ Training Command, Indian Air Force (IAF), said here on Wednesday that 16,200 Agniveers will be recruited in the next four years under the new Agnipath recruitment scheme.

Air Marshal Singh said recruitments will begin soon after the notification is issued. "The recruitment process takes around 90 days. The IAF has planned to recruit 3,000 youth in the first batch of Agniveers, hopefully by December.

Air Marshal Manavendra Singh addresses the media on Wednesday | VINOD KUMAR T

In the second, third and fourth years, 3,500, 4,400, and 5,300 Agniveers, respectively, will be recruited as airmen as well as non-combatants (enrolled) cadre," he said, adding that the recruitment details will be hosted on the official website of IAF and exams will be held online.

Noting that a six-month specially designed training programme is being worked out for Agniveers, he said even women will be recruited in the future. "On completing the engagement period of four years, 25 per cent of each batch will be enrolled in the regular cadre of IAF, based on their performance and choice," he said. P7

EDU MINISTRY UNVEILS DEGREE PROGRAMME FOR AGNIVEERS

New Delhi: A day after the Centre unveiled Agnipath scheme, a radical recruitment plan for armed forces, the Union education ministry on Wednesday announced it will launch a special three-year skill-based bachelor's degree programme for those recruited under the scheme. The aim is to increase career options for Agniveers, as the recruits are to be known, and prepare them for civil jobs post their tenure in the armed forces. P10

EXPRESS READ

Search intensifies to trace commando

Belagavi: The police have formed a team to trace Subedar Major Surjeet Singh who went missing from Belagavi on June 11. He is attached to the commando wing of MLIRC, Belagavi. Subhedar Major Singh (47) is a native of Punjab's Gurdaspur district. P7

K'taka CET from today, 2,16,525 to write exam

Bengaluru: As many as 2,16,525 students are taking up the Common Entrance Test (CET), to seek entry into professional courses in the state. The test will be held from June 16 to 18 in 486 centres in the State, including 87 centres in Bengaluru.

After 104 hrs, C'garh boy pulled out of borewell

Raipur: After being trapped inside a borewell for about five days, a differently-abled boy was pulled out alive on Tuesday night. It took a marathon rescue operation lasting 104 hours and involving some 500 personnel to pull out the 11-year-old. P7

POLICE ENTER CONG HQ, BEAT UP CADRE? COPS DENY

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Congress headquarters here witnessed high drama on Wednesday as the party continued its protest over the questioning of its leader Rahul Gandhi by the Enforcement Directorate in the National Herald case for the third consecutive day.

Party leaders alleged that Delhi Police personnel forcibly entered its headquarters at Akbar Road and thrashed them, posting a video of the incident on Twitter to substantiate their claims. However, the police denied their allegations.

"In an act of absolute goondaism perpetuated by the Delhi Police at the instance of the Modi government, the police today forcibly entered the national headquarters of the Congress here and beat up party workers and leaders. This is patently criminal trespass," Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said.

Other senior leaders alleged security personnel misbehaved with women parliamentarians and treated them like 'criminals'. Jothimani Sennimalai, Tamil Nadu MP, released a video appealing to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to initiate action against security personnel.

"We were brutally beaten up and assaulted on Tuesday and today as well. Our clothes were torn and shoes were removed. They are taking us to an unknown location. We needed water but the police didn't allow us to purchase water. The security personnel bundled 7-8 women in the bus and treated them like criminals," she alleged.

Detained party leaders such as Sachin Pilot, Amrita Dhawan, Ajay Yadav, Vivek Bansal, Lalji Desai and Srinivas B V were taken to different police stations in Alipur, Narela, Vasant Kunj, Najafgarh, and Burari. Congress demanded that an FIR for criminal trespass be filed, erring police personnel suspended and disciplinary action initiated against them. But the police rejected the charges. P9

Congress workers protest Enforcement Directorate's summoning of Rahul Gandhi, outside the party headquarters in Delhi on Wednesday | SHEKHAR YADAV

5G auctions from July 26; level playing field for firms

RAKESH KUMAR @ New Delhi

DECKS were cleared on Wednesday for 5G spectrum auctions to provide services to the public and enterprises both, with the Cabinet approving a proposal by the Department of Telecom for its rollout. A total of 72,097.85 MHz of spectrum with 20-year validity will up for grabs when the auctions begin on July 26.

The Cabinet ignored the demand of telecom operators to reduce the base price of spectrum and not allow private enterprises to have their own 5G network. Analysts believe it will enhance the debt of telcos. Telecom operators had asked for a 90% cut in the reserve price and also urged the ministry not to provide direct 5G network to private enterprises. P9

Council polls: Cong, BJP win one each

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

AS the results of two out of four Karnataka Legislative Council seats that went to the polls were declared on Wednesday night, the ruling BJP which won the West Teachers' seat and opposition Congress that won the North West Teachers' constituency were found on an equal footing, while JDS failed to make any mark.

Prakash Hukkeri

Basavaraj Horatti

When the reports last came in, BJP candidate Hanumant Nirani was leading against Sunil Annappa Sank of Congress by over 32,000 votes in the North West Graduates' seat. Nirani's supporters, however, were already celebrating as his victory was almost certain. In the South Graduates' seat, Congress candidate Madhu G Madegowda was leading against Ravishankar of BJP in a tough contest and the counting of votes was still underway. The result may go either way, depending on the second-preference votes. BJP, though lost the North West Teachers' seat that it earlier held to Congress, it managed to wrest the West Teachers' constituency from JDS.

For BJP, former Council chairman Basavaraj Horatti won the West Teachers' seat by defeating Basavaraja Gurikara of Congress with a big margin of 4,669 votes. P4

PM's visit: It's early Dasara in Mysuru

K SHIVA KUMAR @ Mysuru

The heritage city of Mysuru is all decked up in Dasara style to welcome Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is taking part in the International Yoga Day celebration in front of Mysuru Palace on June 21.

Though Dasara is months away, the city is all set to glitter with the Dasara-style lighting along the stretches the Prime Minister's convoy will pass to reach the hotel from the Mysuru Airport. Mysuru Palace, the All-India Institute of Speech Hearing, Maharaja's College Grounds, prominent junctions and also trees along the route will wear a festive look.

The Mysuru City Corporation is working overtime to asphalt the arterial roads to ensure a smooth drive for Modi and his entourage. P4

A road in Mysuru gets a fresh coat of tar ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the city to take part in Yoga Day celebrations | UDAYASHANKAR S

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike
N.R Square, Bengaluru - 560 002.

Covid-19 - Precautionary measures to be adhered by the public

It is mandatory to wear a mask to cover the mouth and nose in public places

Frequent washing of hands with soap or sanitizer

Keep a handkerchief or other garment in case of sneezing, coughing

Avoid touching of Mouth, nose and eyes with your hand

Spitting, urinating, or littering is prohibited in public places

Maintain Safe distance from others (Physical distance at least 6 feet)

• Penalty will be imposed if the mask is not worn or maintain physical space

• If you have any symptoms kindly get yourself checked in any one of the free testing centers immediately.

The public must comply with the above instructions to help control the Covid-19 virus

Rakesh Singh, I.A.S
Administrator, BBMP

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